



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FWS SEES POSSIBILITY OF ALL-TIME RECORD FISH CATCH IN 1956

American fishermen will take more than five billion pounds of fish from the seas in 1956 and set an all-time national record unless some unforeseen circumstance intervenes, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton said today.

Fish and Wildlife Service records indicate that about 70 percent of a year's catch is landed by September 1 and that this year the total landings are running nearly half a billion pounds ahead of those of last year and well ahead of the landings on September 1, 1941, the record year. Even if the catch in the final quarter is only normal the record will be broken, the Secretary explained.

In 1955 the total American catch was 4,600,000,000 pounds; in 1941 it was 4,900,000,000 pounds which is the present record year.

Menhaden, a fish used primarily for oil and meal and usually comprising about 40 percent of the catch, is setting the pace with an increase of 200 million pounds. Other species which have been taken in considerably greater volume than in 1955 are: tuna, up 60 million pounds; Alaska salmon, up 50 million; Alaska herring, up 39 million; California sardine, up 28 million; Maine sardine, up 26 million; Pacific jack mackerel, up 23 million; Pacific mackerel, up 9 million; ocean perch, up 6 million; haddock, up 10 million; halibut, up 7 million.

The value "at the boat" for the 1955 catch was \$325 million, Director John L. Farley of the Fish and Wildlife Service said. Prices are somewhat better this year, which, together with the larger catch indicates an increase in the value of the catch to the fishermen.

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